
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

22nd March to 28th March, 2021

PREFACE

Dear Students,

The 'Current Affairs' section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the Week. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfill aspirations.

Happy Reading

Team CL



Career
Launcher

National



President of India gave assent to National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill 2021

- The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2021, which enhances the powers of the Lieutenant Governor and limits the elected government's power in Delhi.
- According to the legislation, the “government” in Delhi means the “Lieutenant Governor” and the city government will now have to seek the opinion of the L-G before taking any executive action.
- **Rajya Sabha** had witnessed massive uproar when the opposition, led by the Congress and the AAP, alleged that the Modi government was trying to bypass the elected Delhi Assembly by bringing an ‘unconstitutional’ bill to empower the Lt Governor and was practising ‘coercive federalism’.
- Union Minister G Kishan Reddy had said the amendments would lead to transparency and clarity in governance in NCT of Delhi and enhance public accountability. While explaining the rationale behind the bill, he said the amendments have been brought to remove ambiguities in the existing Act.
- G Kishan Reddy further said that changes in the law have been sought in the spirit of what has been said in a Supreme Court judgment, adding that there was no political angle and the amendments are on “technical” grounds.

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, Delhi city proper's population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai. Anil Baijal is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi. The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Delhi is a Union Territory with a legislature, and it came into being in 1991 under Article 239AA of the Constitution inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991.

PM Narendra Modi arrived in Dhaka as Bangladesh marks 50th year of liberation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Dhaka on a two-day visit to Bangladesh during which he attended the celebrations of the golden jubilee of the country's independence. This is Modi's first foreign visit post COVID-19 outbreak in India last year in March. The Prime Minister is set to visit the birth centenary of ‘Bangabandhu’ Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and hold talks with his counterpart Sheikh Hasina.
- The memo, dated April 28, 1971, came a month after Pakistani troops had launched ‘Operation Searchlight’ that targeted Bangladeshi freedom fighters, the minority Hindu population, teachers, students, and activists brutally, with millions of casualties.
- As Bangladesh commemorates 50 years of its Liberation movement, that began with the declaration of Independence by the Mukti Bahini (Freedom Fighters) led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on March 26, 1971, the spotlight also turns to events at the time in India and the United States, that were recounted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka, and through a special remembrance in the U.S. Congress.

- A few days after the Mujib declaration, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi moved a resolution in Parliament condemning the Pakistani crackdown as “genocide”. On April 3, she met with the Tajuddin Ahmed, Mujib’s nominee for PM of the provisional government, and promised support, including an office in Calcutta that belonged to the R&AW intelligence agency. Mrs. Gandhi insisted on secrecy, however, until she was able to garner international support for the cause. While the US was dead set against India’s stand, Mrs. Gandhi found some support in Moscow, and the Indo-Soviet treaty of Peace and Cooperation was signed in August 1971.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country’s largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. Sheikh Hasina is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh. India shares its longest international border with Bangladesh (4,096-kilometer) (2,545-mile).

Mahbubnagar to house India’s first lithium-ion cell unit

- In a first, an energy park is coming up in Mahbubnagar, Telangana for manufacturing lithium-ion cells, which may potentially provide direct and indirect employment to 10,000 people of the district.
- As part of the project, battery manufacturer ChargeXO and renewable energy firm Greenko have come forward to invest Rs 2,000 crore in about 100 acres for the first lithium-ion cell manufacturing unit in India.

Telangana is a state in India situated on the south-central stretch of the Indian peninsula on the high Deccan Plateau. On 2 June 2014, the area was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital. It is a land locked state in India. Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhara Rao has been serving as the first and current Chief Minister of Telangana since 2014. Tamilisai Soundararajan is an Indian medical doctor serving as current Governor of Telangana.

PM Narendra Modi launched Catch the Rain campaign on World Water Day

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign on the occasion of World Water Day (March 22). The ‘Catch the Rain’ campaign will be undertaken across the country, in both rural and urban areas. It is being implemented from March 22 to November 30 - the pre-monsoon and monsoon period in the country.
- In the presence of the Prime Minister, the signing of the historic Memorandum of Agreement between the Minister of Jal Shakti and the Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh to implement the Ken Betwa Link Project also took place.
- This is the first project of the National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers. This project involves transfer of water from the Ken to the Betwa River through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers. It will provide annual irrigation of 10.62 lakh hectare, drinking water supply to about 62 lakh people and also generate 103 MegaWatt of hydropower.
- The Project will be of immense benefit to the water starved region of Bundelkhand, especially to the districts of Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi and Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh. It will pave the way for more interlinking of river projects to ensure that scarcity of water does not become an inhibitor for development in the country.
- It will be launched as a Jan Andolan to take water conservation at grass-root level through people’s participation. It is intended to nudge all stakeholders to create rainwater harvesting structures suitable to the climatic conditions and subsoil strata, to ensure proper storage of rainwater.

Ministry of Jal Shakti is a ministry under Government of India which was formed in May 2019 under the second Modi ministry. This was formed by merging of two ministries; Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is currently serving as Union Cabinet Minister in Ministry of Jal Shakti. He is a member of parliament from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) representing Jodhpur in the Lok Sabha.

UP, MP seal Ken-Betwa linking project deal; environmentalists flag concerns

- **Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for starting work on country's first major interlinking of two monsoon rivers, Ken and Betwa, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, even as environment activists said the project would spell doom for the Panna tiger reserve which is known for critically endangered white-rumped vultures besides successful restoration of tiger population.**
- **The MoA was signed 18 years after the project was first conceived as a part of country's ambitious programme to inter-link rivers to provide water to areas facing scarcity.** Officials said the delay was because of no agreement between the two states on sharing of water during the lean supply months, November to April.
- **The Uttar Pradesh government, which was initially demanding 930 million cubic meter (MCM) water during the Rabi season, settled for 750 MCM while MP will get 1,834 MCM water, said an officer of MP water resource department.**
- **According to the project report, 2,800 MCM of water will be diverted from Ken basin to water deficit Betwar basin through a 73.8 meter high dam proposed on Ken at Daudhan in MP's Chhattarpur district.** The report also said 6,017 hectares forest land of Panna Tiger Reserve and Ken Ghariyal Sanctuary would be submerged in the dam reservoir.

Indian Rivers Inter-link is a proposed large-scale civil engineering project that aims to effectively manage water resources in India by linking Indian rivers by a network of reservoirs and canals to enhance irrigation and groundwater recharge, reduce persistent floods in some parts and water shortages in other parts of India. India accounts for 18% of the world population and about 4% of the world's water resources. On 16 September 2015, first linking was completed of rivers Krishna and Godavari. It is still under review. But it isn't considered as a true river interlinking as it is just a small lift irrigation with few lines of pipes.

Uttar Pradesh develops India's first FPO portal

- **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the UP FPO Shakti Portal as part of the Kisan Kalyan Mission at an event in Gorakhpur.**
- **The portal, the first of its kind in the country, has been developed by the department of agriculture with the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and is aimed at benefitting the farmers at the grassroots level.**
- **It will bring farmers, producer groups, traders and the department of agriculture and other allied departments of the state government on one platform.**

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state's Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

Niti Aayog sets up task forces for achieving policy certainty in contract enforcement

- **Government think tank Niti Aayog has constituted two task forces that will recommend a policy framework for the enforcement of contracts as well as effective conciliation mechanism.**
- **One task force, which will suggest facilitation of speedy resolution of contractual disputes between private entities and the government, will be headed by Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.** The terms of reference of the task force headed by Kant will include **developing and formulating guidelines for an effective conciliation mechanism, for speedy settlement/resolution of disputes arising out of contracts between the government (ministries, CPSEs) and private contractor/concessionaire.**
- **The second task force, which will recommend a policy framework for the enforcement of contracts, will be led by Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar and will have members from key ministries and departments.**

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. It was established to replace the Planning Commission which followed a top-down model. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.

Andhra Pradesh launched India's first run ambulance network for animals

- In what has been described as a **first in the history of India**, the YS Jaganmohan Reddy government in Andhra Pradesh has announced the launch of a sarkari ambulance network for animals. The novel initiative is aimed at promoting animal husbandry, which is a part and parcel of agriculture.
- To further boost the animal husbandry and veterinary sector in Andhra Pradesh, the state government has now decided to set up "India's first government-run ambulance network" for animals. A total of 175 mobile ambulances (veterinary) clinics will be placed at Assembly Constituency Level on the lines of 108 Services for providing Veterinary services at the doorstep.
- These mobile ambulances shall provide veterinary first aid services along with spot diagnosis and attending to emergency cases. One of the major facilities these ambulances will provide is the 'Hydraulic Lift' facility to lift animals and shift them to the nearest Government Veterinary Facility in case of emergency.

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have Five Deputy Chief Ministers one each from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, backward, minority and Kapu communities. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the current Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have three capital cities; there are Visakhapatnam (Executive capital), Amaravati (Legislative capital) and Kurnool (Judiciary). Andhra Pradesh High Court imposed a stay on implementation of 3 capitals. Andhra Pradesh is the first state to be formed on a linguistic basis in India on 1 October 1953. On 2 June 2014, Telangana was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital.

India and Pakistan will hold the first meeting in three years of a commission that deals with water rights on the Indus River

- India and Pakistan was held the first meeting in three years of a commission that deals with water rights on the Indus River illustrating a broader resumption of diplomatic ties.
- The Permanent Indus Commission set up under the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 met in New Delhi on March 23 to 24. At the forthcoming talks, Pakistan raised its objections on the technical designs of India's Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai hydroelectric plants.
- The talks represent a thawing in bilateral ties, which have been frozen since a 2019 suicide bombing in Indian Kashmir blamed on Pakistan-based guerrillas and India's decision later that year to strip Kashmir's constitutional autonomy in order to bind it closer to India.

The Indus Waters Treaty is a water-distribution treaty between India and Pakistan, brokered by the World Bank, to use the water available in the Indus River and its tributaries. The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) was signed in Karachi on 19 September 1960 by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistani President Ayub Khan. The Treaty gives control over the waters of the three "eastern rivers" — the Beas, Ravi and Sutlej with a mean annual flow of 33 million acre-feet (MAF) to India, while control over the waters of the three "western rivers" — the Indus, Chenab and Jhelum with a mean annual flow of 80 MAF to Pakistan. India was allocated about 20% of the total water carried by the Indus system while Pakistan was allocated the remainder.

Maithri Aquatech sets up 'World's First Mobile Water from Air Kiosk' at Vizag Smart City

- Maithri Aquatech, a company formed under the 'Make in India' initiative has set up the 'World's First Mobile Water from Air Kiosk and Water Knowledge Centre' in the smart city of Visakhapatnam. Smart City Visakhapatnam gets the 'World's First Mobile Water from Air Kiosk and Water Knowledge Centre'. This initiative is supported by GVMC (Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation) and project SEWAH (Sustainable Enterprises for Water and Health) - an alliance between USAID and SWN (Safe Water Network).

Union Cabinet approved the signing of MoU between UPSC, Afghanistan's IARCSC

- **Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), India and Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Services Commission (IARCSC), Afghanistan.** The MoU will strengthen the relationship between IARCSC and UPSC. It will facilitate sharing of experience and expertise of both the institutions in the area of recruitment.
- The MoU includes **exchange of information and expertise including books, manuals and other documents which are not of a confidential nature and sharing of expertise** in the use of Information Technology (IT) for the preparation of written examinations and holding of Computer Based Recruitment Tests and Online Examinations.

UPSC is a constitutional body and the central recruiting agency of the country. Articles 315 to 323 in Part XIV of the constitution talk about UPSC. Accordingly, as per Article 315, at Union level, Union Public Service Commission is envisaged by it. UPSC is amongst the few institutions which function with both autonomy and freedom, along with the country's higher judiciary and lately the Election Commission. **Under Article 320 of the Constitution of India, the Commission is, inter-alia, required to be consulted on all matters relating to recruitment to civil services and posts.**

IMD launches new climate data portal

- **A steep rise in mean temperatures** have been recorded across all seasons since 1996 onwards over India with the sharpest rising trend recorded in the pre-monsoon season, shows **India Meteorological Department's latest offering—Climate Data Service Portal.** The data highlights the impact of climate change on India's mean temperature trends.
- **The portal launched on the occasion of World Meteorological Day** has real time visualisation of meteorological data from across the country; climatological tables; visualisation of historical meteorological data including of monsoon rainfall pattern; mean temperature rise; frequency of cyclones etc.
- According to IMD, the CDSP will **help researchers and the government in climate change studies; planning and mitigation strategies;** early warning to people etc. Statistical analysis of meteorological data in the portal is still under development.

India Meteorological Department (IMD) is an agency of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India. It is the **principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology.** **IMD is headquartered in Delhi** and operates hundreds of observation stations across India and Antarctica. **Regional offices are at Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, Nagpur, Guwahati and New Delhi.**

Nirmala Sitharaman launches Central Scrutiny Centre and IEPFA mobile App

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman launched Central Scrutiny Centre and Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority, IEPFA mobile App to leverage digital solutions** to achieve Prime Minister's vision of '**Digitally empowered India**'.
- These two initiatives will create a new corporate and investor friendly ecosystem. **The Mobile App aims at achieving the goal of financial literacy, spreading investors' awareness,** education, and protection among investors. The Mobile App has been developed for citizen engagement and information dissemination to promote awareness among investors.
- **The Finance Minister** said that the **Central Scrutiny Centre will scrutinize certain Straight Through Process, STP Forms filed by the corporates on the MCA21 registry** and flag the companies for more in-depth scrutiny.

Nirmala Sitharaman is the current Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs of India. She is currently a member of the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka. Sitharaman formerly served as the Defence Minister of India, thereby becoming India's second female defence minister and also the second female finance minister after Indira Gandhi, and first full-time female Finance Minister. Sitharaman featured in the Forbes 2020 list of 100 most powerful women and ranked the 41st in the world.

Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank holds virtual meeting with Director General of UNESCO

- **Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank held a virtual meeting with Director General UNESCO, Ms Audrey Azoulay** in New Delhi. They discussed **key issues of mutual importance including National Education Policy, India's response to COVID Pandemic especially in the education sector.**
- **He also spoke about Manodarpan, the government's initiative to provide online psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for their mental health and emotional wellbeing.** The Minister also mentioned that competitive entrance exams for almost 23 lakh students, the largest entrance examinations in the world were conducted successfully and safely during the covid pandemic.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris. **Audrey Azoulay** appointed as the **Director-general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),** becoming the **second female leader of the organization.**

Ladakh LG inaugurates first Solar Lift Irrigation Scheme of KREDA at Latoo Village

- **Ladakh Lieutenant Governor R K Mathur has inaugurated the first Solar Lift Irrigation Scheme of Kargil Renewable Energy Development Agency (KREDA) at Latoo Village.**
- **This is the last Village on the LOC.** The project is **inspired by the Vision of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for solarising Ladakh as a model region by making it fully solarised and Carbon Neutral.**
- The agency has **successfully installed and Commissioned a 41 Hp Submersible Pump backed with 50 Kw Solar Photovoltaic Plant making the first prototype of the Solar Lift Irrigation System in Ladakh** in coloration with Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Kargil.

Until October 31, 2019, Ladakh was a region of the Indian-administered state of Jammu and Kashmir. In August 2019, the **Parliament of India passed an act by which Ladakh became a union territory on 31 October 2019.** The **largest town in Ladakh is Leh, followed by Kargil, each of which headquarters a district.** **Radha Krishna Mathur is a retired 1977 batch IAS officer of Tripura cadre is the first Lieutenant Governor of the union territory of Ladakh.**

NHAI to develop world class 'Wayside Amenities' at more than 600 locations

- In a major move to improve commuters' experience on National Highways for both passengers and truckers, the **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will develop world class 'Wayside Amenities' at more than 600 locations across 22 states** in the next five years.
- **Out of these, 130 are targeted for development in 2021-22.** NHAI has already **invited bids to develop 120 such wayside amenities.** As per plan, wayside amenities will be **developed every 30 to 50 kilometer** along the current and upcoming Highways and Expressways.
- The amenities will include **numerous facilities for passengers such as Fuel Station, Electric Charging Facilities, Food Court, Retail Shops, ATM, Toilets with shower facility, Children Playing Area, Clinic, Village Haat for local handicrafts etc.**

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, **set up in 1988 and is responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,15,000 km in India.** It is a nodal agency of the **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.** NHAI has **signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation** for satellite mapping of highways. **Sukhbir Singh Sandhu (IAS) is the present Chairman of NHAI since 28 October 2019.**

UP approves scheme offering affordable rental housing for urban poor

- **The Uttar Pradesh government will start a scheme offering affordable rental housing for poor people living in cities** and a proposal to this effect was approved by the state cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

- Under the Affordable Rental Housing and Complexes (ARHC) scheme, **urban migrants/poor labourers, those belonging to economically weaker sections, low income groups including factory workers, educational institutions, people associated with hospitality and students** will be the **beneficiaries**.
- **Preference will be given to people belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, widows, working women, divyang and minorities**, which will be subject to the provisions made by the state government.
- **The ARHC scheme has been launched by the government of India through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs under ‘self-reliant India’ campaign.**

Central government has launched Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHC) Scheme 2021 under the flagship Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. The scheme aims to cover nearly 3 lakh beneficiaries initially, with an estimated expenditure of around Rs 600 crore. The ARHC scheme will have a two-pronged approach; first, existing vacant government funded housing complexes will be **converted into ARHCs through a concession agreement for 25 years.**

India and the US started two-day naval exercise PASSEX in Bay of Bengal

- **India and the US kicked off a two-day naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal**, reflecting the growing congruence in their defence and military partnership. **Indian Navy deployed its warship Shivalik and long-range maritime patrol aircraft P8I in the ‘PASSEX’ exercise** while the US Navy was represented by the USS Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group.
- A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a mega naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large number of destroyers, frigates and other ships. In a first, enhancing jointmanship, **Indian Air Force fighters have also been included in the exercise affording the IAF an opportunity to practice air interception and air defence with the US Navy.**

India, Bangladesh ink five MoUs in trade, IT, sports fields

- **India and Bangladesh signed 5 MoUs in the fields of trade, IT and setting up of sports facilities** on the concluding day of the 2-day long official visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- Both leaders agreed that **a direct passenger train named ‘Mitali Express’ will run between Dhaka and New Jalpaiguri.** India gifted 109 ambulances to Bangladesh and also **1.2 million doses of the Covishield vaccine.** **India released a silver coin to commemorate 50 years of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.**
- **Bangladesh also released a gold coin to commemorate the Mujib Borsho.** Both countries agreed to start a new area of cooperation in the field of Civil nuclear and space sectors. Both the leaders also **laid the foundation stone for the construction of a memorial at Ashuganj for the martyrs of Indian armed forces in the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.**

Government sets target to reduce air pollution by 20 to 30 per cent by 2024 under National Clean Air Programme

- Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Prakash Javadekar has said that the **government has set a target to reduce air pollution by 20 to 30 per cent by 2024 under National Clean Air Programme.**
- **The signing of the MoU for 132 identified cities for implementation of city specific action plans to reduce air pollution**, under the programme, there is a **target to improve air quality in 100 cities.** The centre has sanctioned electric buses for 62 cities but it is operational in only 20 cities.

The National Clean Air Programme or NCAP is a government programme launched by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change in 2019. The programme is a pollution control initiative with a major goal of reducing the concentration of coarse and fine particulate matter in the atmosphere by at least 20% by the year 2024.



Joe Biden invites PM Modi and top world leaders to US-hosted virtual summit on climate

- **President Joe Biden has invited 40 world leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to a US-hosted virtual summit on climate** to underscore the urgency and the economic benefits of stronger climate action.
- **Biden will host a two-day climate summit of world leaders starting on Earth Day, April 22**, in which he will outline the US goal for reductions of carbon emissions by 2030 – known as the nationally determined contribution under the historic Paris accord.
- The White House said a **key objective of both the Leaders’ Summit and the COP26** will be to catalyse efforts to keep limiting warming 1.5 degree Celsius’ goal within reach.
- The White House said a total of 40 world leaders, including Prime Minister Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin, were invited to the conference, which will be live streamed to the public. The summit will reconvene the US-led Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, which brings together 17 countries responsible for approximately 80 per cent of global emissions and global GDP.

Australian authorities declare natural disaster in flood affected areas of New South Wales

- **In Australia, the government has declared a natural disaster in large swaths of New South Wales as heavy rains continue to batter the state.** The Australian authorities have also ordered the people in parts of Sydney’s northwest to flee their houses in the middle as heavy rains continued to batter the east coast, triggering floods throughout the region.

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world’s sixth-largest country by total area. Australia’s capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Scott Morrison is serving as the current Prime Minister of Australia. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. The country’s other major metropolitan areas are Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, and Adelaide. Australia is a highly developed country, with the world’s fourteenth-largest economy.

US, Belgium, France and Japan hold Mideast naval exercise

- **The US Navy will hold a major naval exercise alongside Belgium, France and Japan in the Mideast amid tensions over Iran’s nuclear programme** in the region.
- **The Group Arabian Sea Warfare Exercise** will see ships from the four countries conduct drills in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman. Ships involved include the French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, as well as the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island. The Belgian frigate HNLMS Leopold I and the Japanese destroyer JS Ariake also will take part, as well as aircraft from the four nations.
- **The drill comes as Iran has abandoned all limits of its 2015 nuclear deal** with world powers in the wake of then-President Donald Trump’s 2018 decision to unilaterally withdraw from the accord.
- **President Joe Biden has expressed a desire to return to the deal if Iran honours the deal’s limits on its nuclear programme.** However, tensions remain high after militias in Iraq — likely backed by Iran — continue to target American interests. Biden launched an airstrike just over the border into Syria in retaliation, joining

every American President from Ronald Reagan onward who has ordered a bombardment of countries in the Middle East.

World's first ship tunnel to be built under Norwegian mountains

- Norway has got the go-ahead to construct what's being billed as the world's first ship tunnel, designed to help vessels navigate the treacherous Stadhavet Sea.
- First announced a few years ago by the Norwegian Coastal Administration, this mile-long, 118-foot-wide tunnel will burrow through the mountainous Stadhavet peninsula in northwestern Norway.
- Building this engineering marvel will cost somewhere in the region of 2.8 billion Norwegian kroner (\$330 million) and take between three to four years, with construction due to commence in 2022.

Norway is a Nordic country in Northern Europe whose mainland territory comprises the western and northernmost portion of the Scandinavian Peninsula. Oslo is the capital and most populous city of Norway. Harald V of the House of Glucksburg is the current King of Norway. Erna Solberg has been Prime Minister since 2013. The krone is the currency of Norway and its dependent territories.

Dubai International (DXB) Partners with Magzter to become World's First "Smart Reading Airport"

- Customers flying through Dubai International (DXB) now have free access to Magzter's collection of more than 7,000 leading magazines, newspapers, journals and comics, making DXB the world's first 'smart reading airport'.
- A fully contactless and paperless digital experience - using geo-fencing satellite technology - the Magzter partnership enables customers travelling through DXB to download the latest issues of world-renowned publications on their own devices, to read in the airport and onboard their flights. DXB's 'Smart Reading Zone' can also be accessed by logging onto the airport's super-fast, free wifi network, which acts as a gateway to Magzter's extensive collection of publications.
- Eugene Barry, Dubai Airports' Executive Vice President - Commercial, commented, "We're delighted to partner with Magzter to offer another world-class digital experience at DXB, at a time when travellers are seeking minimum contact, customised choices and ultra-convenience.

Indo-Pacific outreach: India conducts maiden joint naval patrolling with Madagascar

- In a first, the navies of India and Madagascar undertook joint patrolling of Madagascar's EEZ as New Delhi sought to expand its defence footprints in the Western Indian Ocean where it has been a traditional net security provider.
- Indian Navy's INS Shardul and Malagasy Naval Ship Trozona undertook Joint Patrol of Madagascar's Exclusive Economic Zone and participated in PASSEX. This outreach is part of India's efforts to establish stability in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The first ever Joint Patrol between the navies of India and Madagascar reflect the growing defence ties between the two Indian Ocean neighbours aimed at the common objective of ensuring maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.

Indian Ocean is the third-largest of the world's oceanic divisions, covering 70,560,000 km² (27,240,000 sq mi) or 19.8% of the water on Earth's surface. It is bounded by Asia to the north, Africa to the west and Australia to the east. Atlantic Ocean is the second-largest of the world's oceans. Pacific Ocean is the largest and deepest of Earth's oceanic divisions. Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench, located in the western north Pacific, is the deepest point in the world, reaching a depth of 10,928 meters (35,853 feet).

In a first, Indian Navy to participate in French naval exercise La Perouse, Quad allies to join

- The Indian Navy will be part of a French naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal next month. The participating nations also include the other Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) member countries – Australia, Japan and the United States of America (USA).

- **This is the first time that the Indian Navy will be part of the France-led war game ‘La Perouse’.** Until now, India was not invited for the French naval exercise.
- After the Malabar Exercise in November last year, during which the navies of India, the US and Japan got together with Australia as the new addition, India’s inclusion in the France-led joint naval drill is a significant step.
- This will be followed by another important naval exercise ‘Varuna’, which takes place annually between India and France. This time it will also include the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- India’s maritime diplomacy involves naval exercises with several friendly countries, keeping in mind China’s increasing influence in the Indian Ocean region. The inclusion of more navies in such exercises is also a response to Chinese aggression in international waters and its increasing foray into the region.
- As part of maritime cooperation, the Indian and Vietnamese navies carried out a passage exercise in the South China Sea in December 2020.
- The Indian Navy also carried out war games with the navies of Singapore and Thailand in the Andaman Sea, soon after the Malabar Exercise.
- As part of the Indian government’s ‘Neighbourhood First’ vision, the Indian Navy undertook joint exclusive economic zone surveillance with Maldives, Seychelles and Mauritius, as well as coordinated patrols (CORPATs) with Bangladesh, Thailand and Indonesia. The Indian Navy has participated in 13 bilateral and multilateral exercises so far this year.

India improves US Chamber’s IP to 40th place

- India slipped to 40th position on the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, which analyses the IP climate in 53 global economies, this year, according to a report of US Chamber of Commerce’s Global Innovation Policy Center.
- Last year India was ranked at 36th position out of 50 countries. The US, the UK, Sweden, France and Germany remained the top five economies on the intellectual property index in 2019 retaining their spots from the last year.
- “Since the release of the 2016 National IPR Policy, the Government of India has made a focused effort to support investments in innovation and creativity through increasingly robust IP protection and enforcement,” said Patrick Kilbride, Senior Vice President for the Global Innovation Policy Center.
- “The overall global IP environment improved in 2020, with positive score increases in 32 of the 53 economies measured by the IP Index. India ranked 40th in 2020, scoring 38.4 out of 100 on a set of 50 intellectual property-related indicators,” said a statement.

Republic of Congo President Sassou N’Guesso declared winner

- Election officials in Republic of Congo declared President Denis Sassou N’Guesso the winner of an election, further extending his presidency of more than 36 years in office. The election was marked by the death of his main opponent from Covid-19.
- Sassou N’Guesso received 88.5% of ballots cast, according to official results. The top opposition candidate whose death was announced the day after the election, Guy Brice Parfait Kolelas, won 7.8% of the vote. The remaining ballots were split among the five other contenders.
- One of those candidates, Mathias Dzon, has said he plans to appeal to the Constitutional Court to cancel the official results, citing an article of the constitution “which provides for the cancellation of the ballot when a candidate dies or is unable to vote.”

Republic of the Congo is a country located in the western coast of Central Africa. Brazzaville is the capital and largest city of the Republic of the Congo. Clement Mouamba has been Prime Minister of the Republic of the Congo since 2016. Central African CFA franc is the currency of six independent states in Central Africa: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.



20 states implement ease of doing business reforms

- **Five more States namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Meghalaya and Tripura have completed the “Ease of Doing Business” reforms stipulated by the Department of Expenditure.**
- States completing Ease of Doing Business reforms are **eligible for additional borrowing of 0.25 percent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)**. Accordingly, on receipt of recommendations from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), **the Department of Expenditure has granted permission to these 20 States to raise additional financial resources of Rs.39,521 crore through Open Market Borrowings.** State wise amount of the additional borrowing permitted to these 20 States is annexed.
- **The ease of doing business is an important indicator of the investment friendly business climate in the country.** Improvements in the ease of doing business will enable faster future growth of the state economy.
- The reforms stipulated in this category are:
 - (i) **Completion of first assessment of ‘District Level Business Reform Action Plan’**
 - (ii) **Elimination of the requirements of renewal of registration certificates/approvals/licences obtained by businesses under various Acts.**
 - (iii) **Implementation of computerized central random inspection system under the Acts wherein allocation of inspectors is done centrally, the same inspector is not assigned to the same unit in subsequent years, prior inspection notice is provided to the business owner, and inspection report is uploaded within 48 hours of inspection.**

In view of the resource requirement to meet the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of India had on 17th May, 2020 enhanced the borrowing limit of the States by 2 percent of their GSDP. Half of this special dispensation was linked to undertaking citizen centric reforms by the States. **The four citizen centric areas for reforms identified were (a) Implementation of One Nation One Ration Card System, (b) Ease of doing business reform, (c) Urban Local body/ utility reforms and (d) Power Sector reforms.**

Sweden Ranks first among 99 world countries for Global Sustainable Tourism

- **Sweden has been ranked at the top of Euromonitor International’s Sustainable Travel Index, which has classified 99 countries worldwide through the lens of sustainable tourism. The Scandinavian country was followed by Finland, Austria, Estonia as well as Norway, based on the recent report released by the independent provider of strategic market research, Euromonitor International, SchengenVisaInfo.com reports.**
- The report shows that **European countries have been ranked in the top 20 places in the 2020s, Sustainable Travel Index’,** which among other things, takes into account environmental conditions and social impacts on many countries.
- **Euromonitor International stressed that the ranking of countries was made based on seven key factors of sustainable tourism: 1. Environmental sustainability 2. Social sustainability 3. Economic sustainability 4. Risk 5. Sustainable demand 6. Sustainable transport 7. Sustainable lodging.**

RBI sets up external advisory team to screen on tap bank licenses

- **The Reserve Bank of India** announced the **setting up of a standing external advisory committee (SEAC)** to evaluate applications for universal banks and small finance banks. The five member committee will be headed by former deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath.
- **The SEAC** which will have a tenure of three years, and will screen applications for universal and small finance banks after the regulator first vets the proposal. “The applications for Universal Banks and Small Finance Banks will be initially screened by the Reserve Bank to ensure prima facie eligibility of the applicants,” the regulator said.
- It was also stated that a **Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) comprising eminent persons with experience in banking, financial sector and other relevant areas**, will evaluate the applications thereafter and that the constitution of the SEAC will be announced by Reserve Bank.

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1 April 1935 to respond to economic troubles after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his book titled “The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution” and presented to the Hilton Young Commission. The bank was set up based on the recommendations of the 1926 Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, also known as the Hilton–Young Commission. In 1969, the Indira Gandhi-headed government nationalised 14 major commercial banks. Upon Indira Gandhi’s return to power in 1980, a further six banks were nationalised. The first Governor of the RBI was British banker Osborn Smith and C.D. Deshmukh was the first Indian Governor of RBI. Shashikant Das is the current Governor of RBI.

India is the worlds fourth strongest military, China comes first: Study

- **China** has the strongest military force in the world while **India** stands at number four, according to a study released by the defence website Military Direct. “**The USA, despite their enormous military budgets, comes in 2nd place with 74 points, followed by Russia with 69, India at 61 and then France with 58.** The UK just about makes the Top 10, coming in 9th place with a score of 43,” said the study.
- The study said the “**ultimate military strength index**” was calculated after taking into consideration various factors including budgets, number of inactive and active military personnel, total air, sea, land and nuclear resources, average salaries, and weight of equipment. **China** has the strongest military in the world, scoring 82 out of 100 points in the index, it noted.
- “**Based on these scores, which account for budgets, men, and things like air and navy capacity, it does suggest that China would come out as top dog in a hypothetical super conflict,**” it mentioned.
- **The world’s biggest military spender** with a budget of \$ 732 billion per year is the USA, it noted, adding that **China** comes second with \$ 261 billion, followed by **India** at \$ 71 billion. “**China would win by sea, USA by air and Russia by land**” in this hypothetical conflict, it said.
- “**USA** wins in an aerial war with 14,141 total airships vs **Russia** with 4,682 and **China** with 3,587. **The Russian Federation** wins in a land war with 54,866 vehicles vs **USA** with 50,326 and **China** with 41,641,” it mentioned. **China** wins in a sea war with 406 ships vs **Russia** with 278 and the **USA** or **India** with 202.

LT Foods becomes first company to be certified by UN-backed Sustainable Rice Platform

- **LT Foods** has become the first company globally to be certified with the highest level of verification – L3, by UN-backed Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) ecolabel.
- This will enable the **Company** to use **Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) verified logo on the packs of Rice produced by verified 1,000+ farmers growing sustainable rice.** LT Foods works with farmers to grow sustainable & residue free basmati rice as per the SRP standards under its agri programme.
- “**Preferred by Nature**”, the first verification body accredited by SRP, audited 1000+ paddy farmers associated with **LT Foods** in the states of **Haryana and Punjab** covering 4700 hectares of land. LT Foods works with farmers to grow sustainable & residue free basmati rice as per the SRP standards under its agri programme. “Preferred by Nature”, the first verification body accredited by SRP, audited 1000+ paddy farmers associated with **LT Foods** in the states of **Haryana and Punjab** covering 4700 hectares of land.

Central PSU Power Grid Corporation of India Limited established e-Tendering Portal-PRANIT

- **Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, a central PSU, has established an e-Tendering Portal-PRANIT.** This will lead to less paperwork, ease of operation and make the tendering process more transparent.
- Power Ministry has said that with this, **POWERGRID is now the only organization in India to have an eProcurement solution on SAP Supplier Relationship Management,** complying with all applicable requirements relating to security and transparency.

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) is an Indian government electricity board and a Maharatna Public Sector Undertaking owned by Ministry of Power, Government of India which is headquartered in Gurugram, India and engaged mainly in Transmission of Power. POWERGRID transmits about 50% of the total power generated in India on its transmission network.

Government introduces NaBFID Bill in Lok Sabha

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) Bill 2021** in the Lok Sabha to pave the way for **setting up of a government-owned development finance institution to help fund about 7,000 infra projects** under the National Infrastructure Pipeline.
- The proposed legislation will give effect to the Budget announcement made by the finance minister on February 1. **The government has proposed Rs 20,000 crore to capitalise the institution.** The Union Cabinet had last week approved the Budget proposal of setting up a development finance institution (DFI), which will **have tax benefits to enable fund raising from investors.**
- The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development will **be set up with a corpus of Rs 20,000 crore and the government will give an initial grant of Rs 5,000 crore.** The government expects the DFI to leverage this fund to raise up to Rs 3 lakh crore in the next few years.

ICICI Bank launches instant EMI facility on its internet banking platform

- **ICICI Bank announced the launch of an instant EMI (Equated Monthly Instalments) facility** on its internet banking platform.
- **Called 'EMI @ Internet Banking', the facility aims to offer increased affordability to millions of pre-approved customers,** as it enables them to convert their high-value transactions up to Rs. 5 lakh into easy monthly instalments.
- It also **brings in enhanced customer experience as customers get the benefit of EMIs instantly and in a fully digital manner.** ICICI Bank is the first in the industry to introduce an instant EMI facility on its internet banking platform.
- **The Bank has tied up with BillDesk and Razorpay,** leading online payment gateway companies to offer this facility. **Presently, the 'EMI @ Internet Banking' has been enabled for over 1000 merchants** in categories like online shopping portals, insurance, travel, education- school fees and electronic chains.

ICICI Bank Limited is an Indian multinational banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra with its registered office in Vadodara, Gujarat. ICICI Bank was established by the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), an Indian financial institution, as a wholly-owned subsidiary in 1994. ICICI Bank is one of the Big Four banks of India others banks are SBI, Bank of Baroda and HDFC. Sandeep Bakhshi is the current MD & CEO, ICICI Bank since October 2018.

HDFC Bank named India's best SME bank

- **HDFC Bank was adjudged the India's best bank for SMEs at the Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021.**
- In its evaluation the magazine said on its website **HDFC Bank's transformation of its micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) business over the past few years makes it a worthy winner of this award.**
- The Annual Best Banks survey of the financial magazine based in Hong Kong, **aims to identify which banks in each market have excelled across a range of core banking activities over the past 12 months.**

HDFC Bank Limited is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. **HDFC Bank** is India's largest private sector lender by assets. In 1994 **HDFC Bank** was incorporated, with its registered office in Mumbai, India. It is the largest bank in India by market capitalisation as of March 2020. **Sashidhar Jagdishan** is the MD of **HDFC Bank**.

SC rules out extension of moratorium, waives interest on interest

- **The Supreme Court told lenders that they cannot charge interest on interest on the loan amount for all borrowers** that was granted moratorium between March and August 2020 and said lenders have to refund the amount or the amount should be adjusted with the borrowers.
- **The refund or the adjusted amount is likely to be in the range of Rs 7000 crore to Rs 8000 crore**, rating agencies and analysts said. Earlier, following a Supreme Court order, the government has already **refunded the interest on interest to all borrowers of loans below Rs 2 crore**.
- The overall hit to the financial sector for the waiver was **estimated at around Rs 14,500 crore of which relief Rs 6,500 crore was already paid by the government for loans less than Rs 2 crore**.
- The Centre had earlier submitted before the top court that if it were to consider waiving interest on all loans and advances to all categories of borrowers for the six-month moratorium period announced by the RBI in view of the pandemic, then the amount foregone would be more than Rs 6 trillion.

RTGS facility could be extended beyond Indian shores: RBI Governor

- **Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) has multi-currency capabilities and there is scope to explore if its footprint can be expanded beyond India.** Since RTGS, which along with NEFT has been made round the clock now, has multi-currency capabilities, there is scope taking it beyond our shores.”
- Underlining the huge role that technology and innovation played in serving the consumers better and faster, **Das said the RBI processed 274 crore digital transactions to provide direct benefit transfer to people**, most of which happened during the pandemic.
- In a bid to give a push to digital payments, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed the transfer of funds through Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) round-the-clock from December 14**. RTGS System is used for **high-value transactions**. It happens on a real-time basis. Every transaction is settled individually in the case of RTGS. RBI stopped levying charges on transactions through RTGS from July 2019.

RTGS (real time gross settlement) and NEFT (national electronic funds transfer) are electronic payment systems that allow individuals to transfer funds between banks. Both these systems are **maintained by the Reserve Bank of India**. It is **applicable only for money transfer within the country**. **Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) is another payment system in which the money is credited in the beneficiary's account in real-time and on a gross basis.** The RTGS system is **primarily meant for large value transactions that require and receive immediate clearing**.

Alt Indices launches India's first market concentration indices

- **Alt Indices announced the launch of the Herfindahl Hirschman Indices tracking market competition.** Herfindahl Hirschman Index (HHI), hailed as a convenient and ideal measure of market power, has been **widely accepted by various competition regulators, including the Competition Commission of India**, to measure market concentration.
- Such an evaluation aims to ascertain if sanctioning the proposed merger would result in an Appreciable Adverse Effect on Competition (AAEC) or not. **HHI finds a mention in Form II (the Form) of the Competition Commission of India Regulations, 2011 (Combination Regulations)**.
- **The index ranges between (close to) zero, indicating the presence of a large number of firms with each having approximately 0% market share denoting perfect competition, and 10,000 signalling the existence of a sole firm capturing complete 100% of the market i.e., a monopoly.**
- **Alt Indices currently tracks financial and non-financial parameters to assess market competition across three sectors - Banking, Telecommunications, and Insurance sectors.**

Taiwan to ration water for 1 million households, tech hub unaffected

- **Taiwan** will from **next month ration water for more than one million households in the centre of the island because of a drought** but the technology hub of Hsinchu will not be affected.
- **Sub-tropical Taiwan is experiencing its worst drought in half a century**, after rain-soaking typhoons failed to make landfall last year, with shortages most severe across a swathe of western Taiwan, where most people live.
- From April 4, **water supplies in parts of Taichung and Miaoli would be cut for two days every week, with water tankers being sent out to supply residents as needed.**
- **Hsinchu, home to companies like Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co Ltd (TSMC), the world's largest contract chip manufacturer with clients including Apple Inc and Qualcomm Inc, would not be affected.**

Taiwan, officially the Republic of China (ROC) is a country in East Asia. Neighbouring countries include the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the northwest, Japan to the northeast, and the Philippines to the south. Taipei is the capital city. Tsai Ing-wen is serving as the seventh President of the Republic of China (Taiwan), since 2016. New Taiwan dollar is the official currency used in Taiwan.

Finish firms create 'world's first' bioplastics from soy

- **Four Finnish companies have collaborated to produce the 'world's first' compostable bioplastics from food and feed production side-streams.**
- After four years of research, **Finnfoam, Brightplus, VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, and Nordic Soya** say they are the **first in the world to produce an ecological lactic acid polymer from the side-streams of soy production.**

Only 11% low-income countries make their data open: World Bank report

- **Most countries have shied away from an open-data policy more so countries with developing economies, according to a recent World Bank report. Only 11 per cent low-income countries consistently made available with a license classifiable as 'open', the report flagged.**
- The comparable rate for **lower-middle-income countries was 19 per cent, for upper-middle-income countries 22 per cent and high-income countries 44 per cent.** Public intent data, a foundation of public policies, can bring value to development by: Improving service delivery, Prioritising scarce resources and holding governments accountable and empowering individuals
- The exercise can also lead to a better emergency response during disasters — **environmental, financial, health or conflict-related. For example, weather data, especially weather forecasts, can help people anticipate and prepare for extreme events, the report said.**

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries.



Inventions/Discoveries

India first Asian country to join International Pulsar Timing Array with uGMRT

- India has formally joined the elite league of international radio telescopes that are involved in tracking very low-frequency gravitational waves, especially those emerging from two orbiting very large supermassive blackholes.
- Observations made by Pune-based upgraded Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (uGMRT), operated by TIFR – National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA), will be used along with the data gathered by some large radio telescopes located in Europe, America and Australia.
- The International Pulsar Timing Array (IPTA) approved India's full membership as the Indian Pulsar Timing Array (InPTA).
- With uGMRT, India has become the first Asian country to be a full member of IPTA consortium comprising European Pulsar Timing Array (EPTA), North American Nanohertz Observatory for Gravitational Waves (NANOGrav) and Parkes Pulsar Timing Array (PPTA) from Australia.
- With 30 dish antennas each measuring 45m diameter and positioned over 25 km around Khodad village in Junnar, the uGMRT is one of the world's largest and highly sensitive instruments offering a frequency range between 300 to 800 MHz.
- "Presently, the uGMRT is the only radio telescope in the world offering this wide a frequency range and sensitivity. As a result, we will now be able to obtain improved observations by an order of 5, making the overall data more robust.

The International Pulsar Timing Array (IPTA) is a multi-institutional, multi-telescope collaboration, comprising the European Pulsar Timing Array (EPTA), the North American Nanohertz Observatory for Gravitational Waves (NANOGrav), and the Parkes Pulsar Timing Array (PPTA). The goal of the IPTA is to detect and characterize the low-frequency gravitational wave universe through timing a global array of approximately 100 millisecond pulsars using the largest radio telescopes in the world. This goal is shared by each of the participating institutions, but they have all recognized that their goal will be achieved more quickly in collaboration, and by combining their respective resources.

ISRO Demonstrates India's first free-Space Quantum Communication Over 300 Metres

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully demonstrated free-space Quantum Communication over a distance of 300 metres, for the first time in the country.
- A number of key technologies were developed indigenously to accomplish this major feat, which included the use of indigenously developed "NAVIC" receiver for time synchronisation between the transmitter and receiver modules, and gimbal mechanism systems instead of bulky large-aperture telescopes for optical alignment. "The demonstration has included live video conferencing using quantum-key-encrypted signals. This is a major milestone achievement for unconditionally secured satellite data communication using quantum technologies".

- The Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology underpins Quantum Communication technology that ensures unconditional data security by virtue of the principles of quantum mechanics, which is not possible with the conventional encryption systems.
- The conventional cryptosystems used for data-encryption rely on the complexity of mathematical algorithms, whereas the security offered by quantum communication is based on the laws of Physics.

Quantum key distribution (QKD) is a secure communication method which implements a cryptographic protocol involving components of quantum mechanics. It enables two parties to produce a shared random secret key known only to them, which can then be used to encrypt and decrypt messages. It is often incorrectly called quantum cryptography, as it is the best-known example of a quantum cryptographic task.

World's first wildlife bond to track Rhino populations in Africa

- A bond designed to raise funds to grow the population of endangered black rhinoceros in South Africa will be sold by the World Bank this year. The five-year, 670 million rand (\$45 million) security will be the world's first wildlife conservation bond and the aim is to sell it in the middle of the year. Returns for investors will be determined by the rate of growth of the populations of the animal.
- If successful, the program could be expanded to protect black rhino populations in Kenya as well as other wildlife species such as lions, tigers, gorillas and orangutans, Rhino Impact said in a document detailing the proposal.

Russia puts 38 foreign satellites into orbit

- Russia put 38 foreign satellites into orbit after a successful launch from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan following delays due to technical issues. The rocket had successfully placed into orbit the 38 satellites from more than a dozen countries, including South Korea, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy and Brazil.
- Four Indian cosmonauts complete training in Russia for Gaganyaan mission. The four cosmonauts shortlisted for Gaganyaan, India's first manned space mission, have completed their training in Russia.
- The Rs 10,000-crore ambitious project is expected to be launched in 2022, the year of the 75th anniversary of India's Independence. The four Indian Air Force fighter pilots are likely to be potential candidates for the Gaganyaan project.

Two new seaweed species discovered along India's coastline

- Two new red algal seaweed species, which can be a potential raw material for those involved in jelly and ice cream production, have been discovered along India's coastline. A group of marine botanists, led by Felix Bast from the Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB), have traced these native seaweed species along the coasts of Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu and in Gujarat and Daman Diu.
- Both varieties—Hypnea indica and Hypnea Bullata—were discovered in Kanyakumari. The fine and hairy algae Hypnea indica was discovered in Shivrajpur and Somnath Pathan in Gujarat, whereas Hypnea Bullata grew along the coastline of Daman and Diu. It is for the first time we have discovered these red algal species of sea weeds along Indian coasts.

A 'starter kit' for supermassive black holes

- Scientists have reported the discovery of a rare, medium-sized black hole that may help answer one of the more tantalising questions in astronomy: how do their supermassive counterparts come into being?. There are two well-known sizes of black hole – at one end, so-called stellar-class ones which are typically three to ten times the mass of our Sun – and at the other, supermassive ones, found at the centre of most galaxies, including the Milky Way, which are millions to billions times heavier.
- The newly detected 'goldilocks' black hole – about 55,000 solar masses – could be a missing link between these two extremes. Up to now, only a handful of intermediate-mass black holes – between 100 and 100,000 solar masses – have been detected, and none have been squarely in the middle of that range.



Sports Personalities in News

India's Singhraj clinches gold in 2021 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup

- India's Singhraj displayed his skills to win a gold medal at the Al Ain 2021 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup. He bagged the top honours in P1 men's 10m air pistol SH1 finals. Singhraj, the Sydney 2019 World Championships medallist, pipped Rio 2016 bronze medallist Server Ibragimov by 2.8 points. **Singhraj's gold also pushed India (one gold, one bronze) to the third place** in the medals table behind Ukraine (three gold, three silver and a bronze) and the hosts United Arab Emirates (two gold).

Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia wins All England Badminton Championships Men's title; Nozomi Okuhara clinches Women's title

- Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia has won the All England Badminton Championships men's title as he defeated Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the summit clash. With this win, Malaysia's title drought came to an end and it is after four years, that someone from the country has managed to win the All England Open.
- Lee Chong Wei had last won the All England Open for Malaysia in 2017. Japan's Nozomi Okuhara won the women's title as she defeated Pornpawee Chochuwong in the finals.

India Legends win 1st Road Safety World Series cricket title

- All-rounder Yusuf Pathan starred with an unbeaten 62 and two wickets as the Sachin Tendulkar-captained India Legends beat Sri Lanka Legends by 14 runs in the final to win the first Road Safety World Series T20 title.

ISSF World Cup: India's Divyansh Singh Panwar & Elavenil Valarivan win gold medal

- India's Divyansh Singh Panwar and Elavenil Valarivan won the gold medal in the 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team event at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup being held in Delhi. The Indian duo put on a brilliant display of shooting to beat the Hungarian team of Istvan Peni and Eszter Denes 16-10 to take home the top prize.

Ramamangalam to spearhead village sports tourism

- Sandwiched between Kolenchery, Muvattupuzha and Piravom in Ernakulam lie a quaint little village called Ramamangalam, which has been selected to be India's first sports tourism village. Sports and Management Research Institute (SMRI) is working with Ave Stella Maris College and the people of Ramamangalam to make the project become a reality.

Thisara Perera becomes first Sri Lankan to hit six sixes an over

- All-rounder Thisara Perera became the first Sri Lankan to hit six sixes in an over in any form of professional cricket during a domestic tournament. The 31-year-old achieved the feat during his unbeaten 13-ball 52 while captaining Sri Lanka Army in a group match against Bloomfield Cricket and Athletic Club in the Major Clubs Limited Over List A tournament.

World's first polar bear hotel opens in China's Heilongjiang drawing guests, criticism

- Hotel that bills itself as the **world's first "polar bear hotel"** has opened in China's far northeastern **Heilongjiang province**, drawing both guests and criticism for its central feature: live polar bears. **The Polar Bear Hotel**, part of the Harbin Polarland theme park in Heilongjiang's capital and largest city, Harbin.

Indian Railways launches massive drive against smoking and carriage of inflammable

- **Indian Railways** have **launched massive drive against smoking and carriage of inflammable material through Railways** in the view of incidents of fire resulting in loss of property and danger to life in various Zonal Railways. It may be continued till 30th April.
- The drive is aimed to educate all the stakeholders about precautions to be **taken against fire incidents like enforcing "No Smoking"**, and preventing carriage of inflammable material through rail.
- The message is being imparted through direct interaction, distribution of leaflets, pamphlets, pasting of stickers, **conducting Nukkad Nataks, announcement through PA System at stations**, and advertisement in print, electronic and social media.

Chhatrasal Convention Centre developed under Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism inaugurated at Khajuraho

- **Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (Independent Charge) Prahlad Singh Patel** and **Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan** inaugurated the 'Chhatrasal Convention Centre at Khajuraho'.
- The Chatrapal convention center has been **developed under Swadesh Darshan Scheme of Ministry of Tourism** and will help in **establishing Khajuraho as an iconic destination**.

Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launches 'Tribal TB Initiative' in pursuit of TB Mukta Bharat

- **Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan** launched 'Tribal TB Initiative' in pursuit of TB Mukta Bharat. Government accords top priority to ensuring Universal Access to free treatment and care for TB across the country.
- The the government has already increased the Budget **allocation for TB in India a four-fold in the last five years**. Dr Harsh Vardhan said, **the Union Territories of Lakshadweep and district of Badgam in Jammu and Kashmir** have been **declared TB Free on World TB Day** this year.

Sikkim is India's 'most film friendly state', now nationally acknowledged and awarded

- In the recently-concluded **67th National Film Awards**, Sikkim was adjudged the 'Most Film Friendly State' in the country. **The small Himalayan state** was recognised for its emergence as a new film shooting landscape in India.

Actor Samir Soni's debut book 'My Experiments with Silence' to share his darkest, most intense and introspective thoughts

- **Actor Samir Soni** will come out with his debut book later this year in which he will document in prose and poetry some of his "darkest, most intense and introspective thoughts" on anxiety and self-discovery.
- 'My Experiments with Silence' is slated to be published by **OM Books International**. The publishers said this will be a "deeply personal account of Samir Soni's dialogues with himself during his growing up years in Delhi, his stint at Wall Street and his time in Bollywood".

PERSONS IN NEWS

US Senate votes to confirm Indian-American Dr Vivek Murthy to be Prez Biden's Surgeon General

- **US Senate has voted to confirm Indian-American Dr Vivek Murthy to be President Biden's Surgeon General**, handing the administration one of its top public health officials amid the coronavirus pandemic. The Senators voted 57-43 to confirm the Indian American as Biden's surgeon general.
- Dr Murthy said he is deeply grateful to be confirmed by the Senate to serve once again as the Surgeon General. **1977 born Dr Murthy served as the Surgeon General under the Obama administration from 2014 to 2017.** He is a distinguished Physician and former Vice Admiral in the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.

Chinki Yadav shoots to World #1 rank, first athlete from Madhya Pradesh in any sport

- **Shooter Chinki Yadav has become Madhya Pradesh's first athlete to secure a World No. 1 rank in any sport.** With two back-to-back gold medals in the ongoing world championship in Delhi, she has become the world's top ranked pistol shooter in the women's 25m category, with 1,110 rating points.

Saurabh Garg appointed UIDAI CEO, Sanjeev Kumar to be AAI chief

- **Senior bureaucrat Saurabh Garg has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)** as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre.
- **Garg is at present serving in his cadre state Odisha. He is a 1991 batch IAS officer. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Garg as the CEO, UIDAI in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.**
- **Sanjeev Kumar, a 1991 batch IAS officer of Maharashtra cadre, has been appointed as the Chairman, Airports Authority of India (AAI).**

AWARDS

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman conferred Gandhi Peace Prize 2020

- **The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 is being conferred on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The jury for the prize chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and comprising the Chief Justice of India and the leader of the single largest opposition party in Lok Sabha unanimously selected the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for the award.**
- Speaker of the Lok Sabha Om Birla and founder of the social service organisation Sulabh, Bindeshwar Pathak were the other eminent members of the jury. **The Committee selected the name of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in recognition of his outstanding contributions towards social, economic and political transformation through non-violent and other Gandhian methods.**
- **Prime Minister Modi has said that Bangabandhu was a champion of human rights and freedom, and is a hero to Indians as well.**
- **The Gandhi Peace Prize recognizes the immense and unparalleled contribution of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in inspiring the liberation of Bangladesh, bringing stability to a nation born out of strife, laying the foundation for the close and fraternal relations between India and Bangladesh, and promoting peace and non-violence in the Indian subcontinent, said the official press release given out on this occasion.**
- **Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by the Government of India since 1995, the 125th Birth Anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi. The award carries an amount of Rs. 1 crore, a citation, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/ handloom item. It is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, creed or gender.**
- **Julius Kambarage Nyerere from Tanzania is the first person to the Gandhi Peace Prize. A.T. Ariyaratne from Sri Lanka is second person to win the Gandhi Peace Prize from the government of India in 1996.**

Gandhi Peace Prize for year 2019 being conferred on late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman

- **The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019 is being conferred on late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman. The award carries an amount of one crore rupees, a citation, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft item.**
- **Gandhi Peace Prize is an annual award instituted by Government since 1995, the 125th Birth Anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi. The award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.**
- **The Jury for Gandhi Peace Prize is chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and comprises of two ex-officio members, namely the Chief Justice of India and Leader of the single largest Opposition Party in Lok Sabha.**
- **Culture Ministry unanimously decided to select Sultan Qaboos Bin Said Al Said as the recipient of the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019, in recognition of his outstanding contributions for social, economic and political transformation through non-violent and other Gandhian methods. Sultan Qaboos was a visionary leader whose twin policy of moderation and mediation in addressing international issues won him praise and respect across the globe.**

Uttarakhand: Ranger receives international ranger award

- **Mahinder Giri, a range officer who has been deployed at Motichur range of Rajaji Tiger Reserve (RTR) for the past few years, has become the only ranger from Asia to win the prestigious International Ranger Award.**
- **The award has been announced for 10 professionals across the globe by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), “based on their contribution towards conservation”. The award was created in 2020 by IUCN and WCPA in collaboration with International Ranger Federation, Global Wildlife Conservation, and Conservation Allies.**

63rd Grammy Awards: Taylor Swift, Billie Eilish bag top honours

- The 63rd Annual Grammy Awards were held on March 14, 2021, in and around the Los Angeles Convention Center. At the 63rd Grammy Awards, Taylor Swift and Billie Eilish won the top prizes while Beyonce became the most awarded female artist in Grammy history with her 28th win.
- Taylor Swift was awarded album of the year for her lockdown album 'Folklore', while Billie Eilish's "Everything I Wanted" won record of the year.
- Swift is the first female artist ever to win album of the year three times. She has won the award previously for her album 'Fearless' in 2010 and the pop opus '1989' in 2016. Only three other artists - Frank Sinatra, Paul Simon and Stevie Wonder - have ever won the album of the year prize three times.

The Grammy Award (stylized as GRAMMY, originally called Gramophone Award), or just Grammy, is an award presented by the Recording Academy to recognize achievement in the music industry. The trophy depicts a gilded gramophone. The annual presentation ceremony features performances by prominent artists, and the presentation of awards that have more popular interest. The Grammys are the first awards of the Big Three networks' major music awards held annually (between the American Music Awards in fall, and Billboard Music Awards in summer). It is considered one of the four major annual American entertainment awards, along with the Academy Awards (film), the Emmy Awards (television), and the Tony Awards (theater and Broadway). The first Grammy Awards ceremony was held on May 4, 1959, to honor and respect the musical accomplishments by performers for the year 1958. Following the 2011 ceremony, the Academy overhauled many Grammy Award categories for 2012.

Dehradun Smart City awarded Smart City India award 2021

- For its work under the e-Health project, Dehradun Smart City Limited (DSCL) was awarded the Smart City India award 2021 by the central ministry of urban development. All the 100 smart cities had participated in the competition.
- IIT Guwahati and Gifu University have collaborated to offer a Joint International Master's Programme since April 2019 to nurture highly-skilled professionals in the food and related industries.

Legendary Playback Singer Asha Bhosle Conferred with Maharashtra Bhushan Award

- Asha Bhosle has been conferred the Maharashtra Bhushan Award, the highest honour by the state government presented annually. The Ministry of Culture announced that the legendary playback singer will be bestowed with the honour for the year 2020.
- Bhosle is the second member of her family to win this honour, after Lata Mangeshkar was awarded the Maharashtra Bhushan in 1997. She was also the second awardee after writer P. L. Deshpande.

Hindi Writer Prof. Sharad Pagare to be conferred with Vyas Samman - 2020

- Well known Hindi writer Prof. Sharad Pagare will be conferred with the prestigious Vyas Samman - 2020 for his novel 'Patliputru Ki Samragi.'
- The Vyas Samman, started in 1991, is given by K K Birla Foundation for an outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years. It carries an award of four lakh rupees along with a citation and plaque.

Filmfare Awards 2021: Irrfan Khan Wins Posthumous Award - Best Actor

- The 66th edition of the Filmfare Awards was held in Mumbai and Irrfan Khan won a posthumous award: Best Actor - for his work in Angrezi Medium.
- Taapsee Pannu won the Best Actress Award for Thappad, which also bagged the Best Film, Best Story and Best Editing trophies. Amitabh Bachchan won the Best Actor (Critics) award for his performance in Gulabo Sitabo.
- Saif Ali Khan picked the Best Actor In A Supporting Role award for his work in Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior while Kajol's Devi won the Best Short Film (Popular Choice) award.

67th National Film Awards - 2019 were announced; Marakkar Arabikkadalinte Simham wins best feature film awards

- The 67th National Film Awards were announced at a press meet on 22 March 2021 to honour the best Indian films censored in India between Jan 1 and Dec 31, 2019. The awards ceremony, at which the Directorate of Film Festivals presents its annual National Film Awards to honour the best in Indian cinema, was originally slated to be held on 3 May 2020 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It would now be held on May 3, 2021.
- Malayalam movie Marakkar Arabikkadalinte Simham directed by Priyadarshan will be awarded the Best Feature Film Award.
- Sanjay Puran Singh Chauhan will be given best Direction Award for Hindi film Bahattar Hoorain.
- Actor Manoj Bajpayee will be awarded best Actor award for Hindi movie Bhonsle and Dhanush will get the award for Tamil Movie Asuran.
- Mr Chandra said, Kangana Ranaut will get Best Actress award for her movies Manikarnika -The Queen of Jhansi and Panga.
- Vijaya Sethupati will be awarded the best supporting actor award for Tamil film Super Deluxe and Pallavi Joshi will get the best supporting actress award for Hindi film The Tashkent Files. B Praak will get the Best Male playback Singer award for song Teri Mitti in Hindi Film Kesari.
- Savani Ravindra will be awarded Best Female playback Singer award for song Rann Petala in Marathi Movie Bardo.
- D Imman will get best Music Direction Award for his songs in Tamil Film Vishwasam. Prabuddha Banerjee will get the award for background music in Bengali movie Jeyesthaputro.
- Prabha Varma will get the Best Lyrics award for Malayalam movie Kolaambi. Raju Sundaram bagged the Best Choreography award for Telugu Movie Maharshi.
- The award for the most film friendly state goes to Sikkim. Best Non Feature Film will be awarded to Hemant Gaba's An Engineered Dream. The award for the best film critic goes to 'Sohini Chattopadhyay.
- In Non Feature Film category, Best Animation Film to be awarded to Radha. Best Art and Culture film award will be given to Shrikhetra ru Sahijata (Odia).
- The Award for the best Narration for Non-Feature Films goes to Wild Karnataka (English) by Sir David Attenborough. The award for the Best Music Direction in Non-Feature Films goes to Kranti Darshi Guruji- Ahead of Times (Hindi) by Bishakhjyoti.
- The best book on cinema goes to A Gandhian Affair: India's Curious Portrayal of Love in Cinema written by Sanjay Suri.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Forests is celebrated

- **Every year, March 21 is celebrated as the International Day of Forests.** The day was **founded by the Food and Agriculture Organization and United Nations in 2012.** It is aimed at raising public awareness among diverse communities about the values, significance and contributions of the forests to balance the life cycle. International Day of Forests 2021 theme has been declared as is **“Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being”**.

World Poetry Day 21 March

- **In celebrating World Poetry Day, March 21, UNESCO recognizes the unique ability of poetry to capture the creative spirit of the human mind.** One of the main objectives of the Day is to support linguistic diversity through poetic expression and to offer endangered languages the opportunity to be heard within their communities.

World Water Day

- **World Water Day is an annual United Nations (UN) observance day held on 22 March that highlights the importance of fresh water.** The objective of the day is to raise awareness of the global water crisis, and a core focus of the observance is to **support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) which is to ensure water and sanitation for all by 2030.**
- **The theme of this year is ‘valuing water’** specifically recognizes the crucial role of healthy ecosystems in maintaining water supplies around the world.

World Tuberculosis Day being observed on 24th March

- **The day is observed on 24th March every year to raise public awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of Tuberculosis, TB, and to step up efforts to end the global epidemic.** The day is observed to **commemorate the anniversary of Dr. Robert Koch’s discovery of the TB bacteria in 1882.**
- **Each day, nearly 4000 lose their lives to TB and close to 28,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease. Global efforts to combat TB have saved an estimated 63 million lives since the year 2000.**
- **The theme of World TB Day 2021 – ‘The Clock is Ticking’ – conveys the sense that the world is running out of time to act on the commitments to end TB made by global leaders.**

World Meteorological Day 2021

- **World Meteorological Day is observed every year on March 23 to highlight the importance of the role that people and their behaviour play in protecting Earth’s atmosphere.** The day also commemorates the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which is an **intergovernmental body, on March 23, 1950.**
- **The World Meteorological Day theme - The Ocean, our climate and weather – celebrates WMO’s focus in connecting the ocean, climate and weather within the Earth System.** It also marks the starting year of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

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News on AIR
Hindustan Times

QUESTIONS

- In a first, an energy park is coming up in _____ for manufacturing lithium-ion cells.
(a) Mahbubnagar (b) Chittoor (c) Warangal (d) Bhopal
- Which of the following countries has been ranked at the top of Euromonitor International's Sustainable Travel Index?
(a) Norway (b) Finland (c) Sweden (d) Mauritius
- The US Navy will hold a major naval exercise alongside Belgium, France and Japan in the Mideast. The Group _____ will see ships from the four countries conduct drills in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman.
(a) Arabian Sea Warfare Exercise (b) Black Sea Warfare Exercise
(c) Baltic Sea Warfare Exercise (d) Caspian Sea Warfare Exercise
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign on the occasion of _____.
(a) World Water Day (b) World Earth Day
(c) World Environment Day (d) World Sky Day
- Indian States completing Ease of Doing Business reforms are eligible for additional borrowing of _____ percent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
(a) 0.25 (b) 0.50 (c) 0.75 (d) 1.20
- According to a study released by the Defence website Military Direct, which of the following countries has the strongest military force in the world?
(a) Japan (b) USA (c) China (d) Canada
- According to a report by Reuters, a Hotel that bills itself as the world's first "polar bear hotel" has been opened in:
(a) Canada (b) Iceland (c) Denmark (d) China
- Which is the first Asian country to join International Pulsar Timing Array with uGMRT?
(a) India (b) China (c) Bangladesh (d) Sri Lanka
- Name the Indian who won a gold medal at the Al Ain 2021 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup recently.
(a) Amrit Bangapalli (b) Singhraj
(c) Deepak Luthra (d) Madhav Sen
- Recently, who became the most awarded female artist in Grammy history with her 28th win?
(a) Taylor Swift (b) Beyonce
(c) Shakira (d) Priyanka Chopra Jonas
- Who among the following is awarded best Actor for Hindi movie Bhonsle at 67th National Film Award 2019?
(a) Akshay Kumar (b) Nawazuddin Siddhique
(c) Manoj Bajpayee (d) Amitabh Bachchan
- Recently, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for starting work on country's first major interlinking of two monsoon rivers _____.
(a) Narmada and Betwa (b) Ken and Betwa
(c) Yamuna and Chambal (d) Ganga and Ken
- Which of the following state governments recently developed India's first FPO portal?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Haryana (d) Rajasthan

14. Recently, Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has announced _____ per cent fitment for State government Employees and Teachers under Pay Revision and increased the retirement age to 61 years from 58.
(a) 20 (b) 30 (c) 40 (d) 50
15. Which of the following countries has got the go-ahead to construct what's being billed as the world's first ship tunnel, designed to help vessels navigate the treacherous Stadhavet Sea recently?
(a) Sweden (b) Norway (c) Denmark (d) Ireland
16. The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 is being conferred on _____.
(a) Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (b) Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
(c) Girija Prasad Koirala (d) Anerood Jugnauth
17. Recently, Finance Minister introduced the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) Bill 2021. The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development will be set up with a corpus of _____.
(a) Rs 7,000 crore (b) Rs 10,000 crore (c) Rs 15,000 crore (d) Rs 20,000 crore
18. The Reserve Bank of India announced the setting up of a standing external advisory committee (SEAC) to evaluate applications for universal banks and small finance banks. The five member committee will be headed by _____.
(a) Former Deputy Governor Shyamala Gopinath
(b) Former Deputy Governor H.R.Khan
(c) Former Deputy Governor Usha Thorat
(d) Former Deputy Governor Viral V Acharya
19. Who won the All England Badminton Championships men's title recently?
(a) Lakshya Sen (b) Lee Zii Jia (c) Viktor Axelsen (d) Lee Chong Wei
20. World Poetry Day is celebrated across the world on:
(a) 17th March (b) 19th March (c) 21st March (d) 23rd March
21. Which of the following airport partners with Magzter to become World's First "Smart Reading Airport"?
(a) Madrid International (b) New York International
(c) Dubai International (d) Sydney International
22. Recently, India and Pakistan will hold the first meeting in three years of a commission that deals with water rights on the _____ illustrating a broader resumption of diplomatic ties.
(a) Indus River (b) Chenab River
(c) Sutlej River (d) Beas River
23. The Lok Sabha has taken up the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill 2021 for consideration and passage. The Bill amends the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, _____.
(a) 1982 (b) 1985 (c) 1987 (d) 1991
24. To boost the animal husbandry and veterinary sector in _____ the state government has now decided to set up "India's first government-run ambulance network" for animals.
(a) Telangana (b) Odisha (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Karnataka
25. Recently, Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, a central PSU, has established an e-Tendering Portal _____.
(a) PRANIT (b) SUPRIT (c) MAHATYA (d) SUPRITI
26. Recently, The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully demonstrated free-space Quantum Communication over a distance of _____ for the first time in the country.
(a) 150 metres (b) 300 metres (c) 500 metres (d) 750 metres

27. Recently, _____ has become the first company globally to be certified with the highest level of verification – L3, by UN-backed Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) ecolabel.
 (a) LT Foods (b) GT Foods (c) LK Foods (d) MN Foods
28. Which of the following teams won the first Road Safety World Series T20 title recently?
 (a) Sri Lanka Legends (b) West Indies Legends
 (c) South Africa Legends (d) India Legends
29. World Water Day is an annual United Nations observance day held on _____.
 (a) 20 March (b) 22 March (c) 24 March (d) 26 March
30. Recently, The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019 is being conferred on late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of _____.
 (a) Saudi Arabia (b) Jordan (c) Oman (d) Kuwait
31. Recently, Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), India and Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Services Commission (IARC) of _____.
 (a) Kazakhstan (b) Afghanistan (c) Bangladesh (d) Indonesia
32. Recently, Maithri Aquatech, a company formed under the ‘Make in India’ initiative has set up the ‘World’s First Mobile Water from Air Kiosk and Water Knowledge Centre’ in the smart city of _____.
 (a) Visakhapatnam (b) Jaipur (c) Pune (d) Kochi
33. Recently, US Senate has voted to confirm Indian-American _____ to be President Biden’s Surgeon General.
 (a) Dr Vivek Murthy (b) Dr Amit Mohan
 (c) Dr Aniket Jankiraman (d) Dr Vimal Khaitan
34. Which of the following banks recently announced the launch of an instant EMI (Equated Monthly Installments) facility on its internet banking platform called ‘EMI @ Internet Banking’?
 (a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) RBL Bank
35. According to a report of US Chamber of Commerce’s Global Innovation Policy Center, this year India slipped to _____ position on the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, which analyses the IP climate in 53 global economies.
 (a) 40th (b) 43rd (c) 46th (d) 49th
36. Recently, A bond designed to raise funds to grow the population of endangered black rhinoceros in _____ will be sold by the World Bank this year.
 (a) South Sudan (b) South Africa (c) Uganda (d) Nigeria
37. Recently, which of the following countries put 38 foreign satellites into orbit after a successful launch from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan?
 (a) Russia (b) China (c) Japan (d) Spain
38. Recently, Sandwiched between Kolenchery, Muvattupuzha and Piravom in _____ selected to be India’s first sports tourism village.
 (a) Kochi (b) Ernakulam (c) Indore (d) Gulbarga
39. Who among the following actors debut book is ‘My Experiments with Silence’ in which he share his darkest, most intense and introspective thoughts?
 (a) Amitabh Bachchan (b) Ajay Devgan
 (c) Samir Soni (d) Akshay Kumar

40. In the recently-concluded 67th National Film Awards, which of the following states was adjudged the 'Most Film Friendly State' in the country?
 (a) West Bengal (b) Nagaland (c) Sikkim (d) Manipur
41. Who has been recently appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)?
 (a) Saurbah Garg (b) Ankit Chhatterjee (c) Amitabh Acharya (d) Deepak Luthra
42. Recently, the first Solar Lift Irrigation Scheme of Kargil Renewable Energy Development Agency (KREDA) has been inaugurated at _____.
 (a) Bikloi Village (b) Latoo Village (c) Nikoo Village (d) Makhan Village
43. Who will be conferred the prestigious Vyas Samman - 2020 for his novel 'Patliputru Ki Samragi'?
 (a) Prof. Sharad Pagare (b) Prof. Arjun Deshpande
 (c) Prof. Shivraj Dandekar (d) Prof. Vipul Kothare
44. Who has been recently conferred the Maharashtra Bhushan Award, the highest honour by the state government presented annually?
 (a) Lata Mangeshkar (b) Manoj Joshi (c) Asha Bhosle (d) Shreya Ghosal
45. Recently, for the first time, Indian Navy will be part of the France-led war game _____.
 (a) 'La Nerouse' (b) 'La Parisdia' (c) 'La Perouse' (d) 'La Terrance'
46. Recently, In a first, the navies of India and _____ undertook joint patrolling to expand its defence footprints in the Western Indian Ocean where it has been a traditional net security provider.
 (a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) Madagascar (d) Seychelles
47. Recently, Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched Central Scrutiny Centre and Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority, _____ mobile App to leverage digital solutions to achieve Prime Minister's vision of 'Digitally empowered India'.
 (a) CREVA (b) IEPFA (c) GHJYA (d) MRKLA
48. In a major move to improve commuters' experience on National Highways for both passengers and truckers, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will develop world class 'Wayside Amenities' at more than 600 locations across _____ states in the next five years.
 (a) 8 (b) 14 (c) 19 (d) 22
49. What is the name of the government's initiative to provide online psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for their mental health and emotional wellbeing?
 (a) Manodasha (b) Manoyoga (c) Manodhyan (d) Manodarpan
50. Which of the following banks was adjudged the India's best bank for SMEs at the Asia money Best Bank Awards 2021?
 (a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) Kotak Mahindra Bank
51. Which of the following state governments is going to start Affordable Rental Housing and Complexes (ARHC) scheme for urban migrants/poor labourers, those belonging to economically weaker sections?
 (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Odisha
52. Recently, Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (Independent Charge) Prahlad Singh Patel and Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated the 'Chhatrasal Convention Centre at _____.
 (a) Satna (b) Gwalior (c) Jabalpur (d) Khajuraho

53. Recently, Dr Harsh Vardhan said, the Union Territories of _____ and district of Badgam in Jammu and Kashmir have been declared TB Free on World TB Day this year.
 (a) Lakshadweep (b) Ladakh
 (c) Andaman & Nicobar Islands (d) Puducherry
54. Recently, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Prakash Javadekar has said that the government has set a target to reduce air pollution by 20 to 30 per cent by _____ under National Clean Air Programme.
 (a) 2022 (b) 2024 (c) 2026 (d) 2028
55. Recently, USA President Joe Biden has invited _____ world leaders, to a US-hosted virtual summit on climate next month to underscore the urgency and the economic benefits of stronger climate action.
 (a) 20 (b) 30 (c) 40 (d) 50
56. Recently, _____ announced the launch of the Herfindahl Hirschman Indices tracking market competition.
 (a) Alt Indices (b) Enter Indices (c) Tab Indices (d) Home Indices
57. Which of the following countries will from next month ration water for more than one million households in the centre of the island?
 (a) Taiwan (b) Sri Lanka (c) Malaysia (d) Indonesia
58. Recently, A group of marine botanists, led by Felix Bast from the Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB), have traced two native seaweed species along the coasts of Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu and in _____.
 (a) Gujarat and Daman Diu (b) Goa and Puducherry
 (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Tamil Nadu and Andaman & Nicobar Islands
59. Who recently became the first Sri Lankan to hit six sixes in an over in any form of professional cricket during a domestic tournament?
 (a) Thisara Perera (b) Angelo Matthews (c) Niroshan Dickwella (d) Dinesh Chandimal
60. World Tuberculosis Day is observed on:
 (a) 11th March (b) 15th March (c) 18th March (d) 24th March
61. Which of the following two countries kicked off a two-day naval exercise "PASSEX" in the Bay of Bengal, reflecting the growing congruence in their defence and military partnership?
 (a) India and USA (b) India and France (c) India and Japan (d) India and Indonesia
62. Recently, India and Bangladesh agreed that a direct passenger train named _____ will run between Dhaka and New Jalpaiguri.
 (a) 'Mitra Express' (b) 'Mitali Express' (c) 'Megha Express' (d) 'Mridul Express'
63. Who became the only ranger from Asia to win the prestigious International Ranger Award?
 (a) Deepak Luthra (b) Aditya Shekhawat (c) Mridul Mangeshkar (d) Mahinder Giri
64. Which city was awarded the Smart City India award 2021 by the central ministry of urban development?
 (a) Gautam Buddha Nagar Smart City Limited (b) Dehradun Smart City Limited
 (c) Jaipur Smart City Limited (d) Nagpur Smart City Limited
65. Recently, Denis Sassou N'Gusso was declared the new president of:
 (a) The Gambia (b) Nigeria (c) Liberia (d) Republic of Congo
66. According to a recent World Bank report, Only _____ low-income countries consistently made available with a license classifiable as 'open'.
 (a) 5 per cent (b) 11 per cent (c) 16 per cent (d) 20 per cent

67. Recently, Four _____ companies have collaborated to produce the 'world's first' compostable bioplastics from food and feed production side-streams.
(a) Finnish (b) Dutch (c) German (d) Italian
68. Who became the Madhya Pradesh's first athlete to secure a World No. 1 rank in any sport?
(a) Chinki Yadav (b) Aditi Sarkaria (c) Meenal Jain (d) Deepika Kulshetha
69. Recently World Meteorological Day 2021 was observed on:
(a) 21st March (b) 23rd March (c) 25th March (d) 27th March
70. Who won a posthumous award: Best Actor - for his work in Angrezi Medium at 66th edition of the Filmfare Awards?
(a) Rishi Kapoor (b) Rajeev Kapoor (c) Irrfan Khan (d) Sushant Singh Rajpoot



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a In a first, an energy park is coming up in Mahbubnagar for manufacturing lithium-ion cells.
2. c Sweden has been ranked at the top of Euromonitor International's Sustainable Travel Index, which has classified 99 countries worldwide through the lens of sustainable tourism.
3. a The Group Arabian Sea Warfare Exercise will see ships from the four countries conduct drills in the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman. Ships involved include the French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, as well as the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island.
4. a Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan : Catch the Rain campaign on the occasion of World Water Day.
5. a States completing Ease of Doing Business reforms are eligible for additional borrowing of 0.25 percent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).
6. c China has the strongest military force in the world while India stands at number four, according to a study released by the defence website Military Direct.
7. d The Polar Bear Hotel, part of the Harbin Polarland theme park in Heilongjiang's capital and largest city, Harbin.
8. a With uGMRT, India has become the first Asian country to be a full member of IPTA consortium comprising European Pulsar Timing Array (EPTA), North American Nanohertz Observatory for Gravitational Waves (NANOGrav) and Parkes Pulsar Timing Array (PPTA) from Australia.
9. b India's Singhraj displayed his skills to win a gold medal at the Al Ain 2021 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup.
10. b At the 63rd Grammy Awards, Taylor Swift and Billie Eilish won the top prizes while Beyonce became the most awarded female artist in Grammy history with her 28th win.
11. c Actor Manoj Bajpayee will be awarded best Actor award for Hindi movie Bhonsle and Dhanush will get the award for Tamil Movie Asuran.
12. b Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for starting work on country's first major interlinking of two monsoon rivers, Ken and Betwa, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
13. b Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the UP FPO Shakti Portal as part of the Kisan Kalyan Mission at an event in Gorakhpur.
14. b Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has announced 30 per cent fitment for State government Employees and Teachers under Pay Revision and increased the retirement age to 61 years from 58.
15. b Norway has got the go-ahead to construct what's being billed as the world's first ship tunnel, designed to help vessels navigate the treacherous Stadhavet Sea.
16. b The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 is being conferred on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
17. d The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development will be set up with a corpus of Rs 20,000 crore and the government will give an initial grant of Rs 5,000 crore.

- 18. a** The Reserve Bank of India announced the setting up of a standing external advisory committee (SEAC) to evaluate applications for universal banks and small finance banks. The five member committee will be headed by former deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath.
- 19. b** Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia has won the All England Badminton Championships men's title as he defeated Denmark's Viktor Axelsen in the summit clash.
- 20. c** A decision to proclaim 21 March as World Poetry Day was adopted during UNESCO's 30th session held in Paris in 1999.
- 21. c** Customers flying through Dubai International (DXB) now have free access to Magzter's collection of more than 7,000 leading magazines, newspapers, journals and comics, making DXB the world's first 'smart reading airport'.
- 22. a** India and Pakistan will hold the first meeting in three years of a commission that deals with water rights on the Indus River illustrating a broader resumption of diplomatic ties.
- 23. d** The Bill amends the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 which provides a framework for the functioning of the Legislative Assembly and the government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi.
- 24. c** To further boost the animal husbandry and veterinary sector in Andhra Pradesh, the state government has now decided to set up "India's first government-run ambulance network" for animals.
- 25. a** Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, a central PSU, has established an e-Tendering Portal-PRANIT.
- 26. b** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully demonstrated free-space Quantum Communication over a distance of 300 metres, for the first time in the country.
- 27. a** LT Foods has become the first company globally to be certified with the highest level of verification – L3, by UN-backed Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) ecolabel.
- 28. d** All-rounder Yusuf Pathan starred with an unbeaten 62 and two wickets as the Sachin Tendulkar-captained India Legends beat Sri Lanka Legends by 14 runs in the final to win the first Road Safety World Series T20 title.
- 29. b** World Water Day is an annual United Nations observance day held on 22 March that highlights the importance of fresh water.
- 30. c** The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2019 is being conferred on late Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said of Oman.
- 31. b** Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), India and Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Services Commission (IARCSC), Afghanistan.
- 32. a** Maithri Aquatech, a company formed under the 'Make in India' initiative has set up the 'World's First Mobile Water from Air Kiosk and Water Knowledge Centre' in the smart city of Visakhapatnam.
- 33. a** US Senate has voted to confirm Indian-American Dr Vivek Murthy to be President Biden's Surgeon General, handing the administration one of its top public health officials amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- 34. a** ICICI Bank announced the launch of an instant EMI (Equated Monthly Instalments) facility on its internet banking platform.
- 35. a** India slipped to 40th position on the International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, which analyses the IP climate in 53 global economies, this year, according to a report of US Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center.

- 36. b** A bond designed to raise funds to grow the population of endangered black rhinoceros in South Africa will be sold by the World Bank this year.
- 37. a** Russia put 38 foreign satellites into orbit after a successful launch from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan following delays due to technical issues.
- 38. b** Sandwiched between Kolenchery, Muvattupuzha and Piravom in Ernakulam lie a quaint little village called Ramamangalam, which has been selected to be India's first sports tourism village.
- 39. c** Actor Samir Soni will come out with his debut book later this year in which he will document in prose and poetry some of his "darkest, most intense and introspective thoughts" on anxiety and self-discovery.
- 40. c** In the recently-concluded 67th National Film Awards, Sikkim was adjudged the 'Most Film Friendly State' in the country.
- 41. a** Senior bureaucrat Saurabh Garg has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre.
- 42. b** Ladakh Lieutenant Governor R K Mathur has inaugurated the first Solar Lift Irrigation Scheme of Kargil Renewable Energy Development Agency (KREDA) at Latoo Village.
- 43. a** Well known Hindi writer Prof. Sharad Pagare will be conferred with the prestigious Vyas Samman - 2020 for his novel 'Patliputra Ki Samragi.'
- 44. c** Asha Bhosle has been conferred the Maharashtra Bhushan Award, the highest honour by the state government presented annually.
- 45. c** This is the first time that the Indian Navy will be part of the France-led war game 'La Perouse'. Until now, India was not invited for the French naval exercise.
- 46. c** In a first, the navies of India and Madagascar undertook joint patrolling of Madagascar's EEZ as New Delhi sought to expand its defence footprints in the Western Indian Ocean where it has been a traditional net security provider.
- 47. b** Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched Central Scrutiny Centre and Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority, IEPFA mobile App to leverage digital solutions to achieve Prime Minister's vision of 'Digitally empowered India.
- 48. d** In a major move to improve commuters' experience on National Highways for both passengers and truckers, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will develop world class 'Wayside Amenities' at more than 600 locations across 22 states in the next five years.
- 49. d** Manodarpan, the government's initiative to provide online psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for their mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- 50. b** HDFC Bank was adjudged the India's best bank for SMEs at the Asiamoney Best Bank Awards 2021.
- 51. b** The Uttar Pradesh government will start a scheme offering affordable rental housing for poor people living in cities and a proposal to this effect was approved by the state cabinet presided over by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.
- 52. d** Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (Independent Charge) Prahlad Singh Patel and Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated the 'Chhatrasal Convention Centre at Khajuraho.
- 53. a** Dr Harsh Vardhan said, the Union Territories of Lakshadweep and district of Badgam in Jammu and Kashmir have been declared TB Free on World TB Day this year.

- 54. b** Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Prakash Javadekar has said that the government has set a target to reduce air pollution by 20 to 30 per cent by 2024 under National Clean Air Programme.
- 55. c** President Joe Biden has invited 40 world leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to a US-hosted virtual summit on climate next month to underscore the urgency and the economic benefits of stronger climate action.
- 56. a** Alt Indices announced the launch of the Herfindahl Hirschman Indices tracking market competition.
- 57. a** Taiwan will from next month ration water for more than one million households in the centre of the island because of a drought but the technology hub of Hsinchu will not be affected.
- 58. a** A group of marine botanists, led by Felix Bast from the Central University of Punjab, Bathinda (CUPB), have traced these native seaweed species along the coasts of Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu and in Gujarat and Daman Diu.
- 59. a** All-rounder Thisara Perera became the first Sri Lankan to hit six sixes in an over in any form of professional cricket during a domestic tournament.
- 60. d** World Tuberculosis Day is observed on 24th March.
- 61. a** India and the US kicked off a two-day naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal, reflecting the growing congruence in their defence and military partnership.
- 62. b** Both leaders Narendra Modi and Sheikh Hasina agreed that a direct passenger train named 'Mitali Express' will run between Dhaka and New Jalpaiguri.
- 63. d** Mahinder Giri, a range officer who has been deployed at Motichur range of Rajaji Tiger Reserve (RTR) for the past few years, has become the only ranger from Asia to win the prestigious International Ranger Award.
- 64. b** For its work under the e-Health project, Dehradun Smart City Limited (DSCL) was awarded the Smart City India award 2021 by the central ministry of urban development.
- 65. d** Election officials in Republic of Congo declared President Denis Sassou N'Gusso the winner of an election, further extending his presidency of more than 36 years in office.
- 66. b** Only 11 per cent low-income countries consistently made available with a license classifiable as 'open'.
- 67. a** Four Finnish companies have collaborated to produce the 'world's first' compostable bioplastics from food and feed production side-streams.
- 68. a** Shooter Chinki Yadav has become Madhya Pradesh's first athlete to secure a World No. 1 rank in any sport.
- 69. b** The World Meteorological Day theme - The Ocean, our climate and weather – celebrates WMO's focus in connecting the ocean, climate and weather within the Earth System. World Meteorological Day was established in 1961 to commemorate the World Meteorological Organization creation on 23 March, 1950.
- 70. c** The 66th edition of the Filmfare Awards were held in Mumbai and Irrfan Khan won a posthumous award: Best Actor - for his work in Angrezi Medium.